

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
22 November 2001 (22.11.2001)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/88831 A3(51) International Patent Classification⁷: G06F 153/00

(21) International Application Number: PCT/US01/14694

(22) International Filing Date: 8 May 2001 (08.05.2001)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/203,933 12 May 2000 (12.05.2000) US

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): NINTENDO OF AMERICA INC. [US/US]; 4820 150th Avenue, N.E., Redmond, WA 98052 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): JUNGER, Peter, J. [US/US]; SIRAS.com, 1528 150th Avenue, N.E., Redmond, WA 98052 (US). SHOECRAFT, Cassandra, B. [US/US]; SIRAS.com, 1528 150th Avenue, N.W., Redmond, WA 98052 (US). KOON, David, G. [US/US]; SIRAS.com, 4528 150th Avenue, N.W., Redmond, WA 98052 (US).

(74) Agent: KAGEN, Alan, M.; Nixon & Vanderhye P.C., Suite 800, 1100 North Glebe Road, Arlington, VA 22201-4714 (US).

(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report

(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
21 March 2002

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.



WO 01/88831 A3

(54) Title: METHOD/APPARATUS FOR ENABLING PURCHASERS TO OBTAIN RETURN INFORMATION TO RETURN PRODUCTS VIA ON LINE TRANSACTIONS

(57) Abstract: An electronic registration system facilitates authorized product returns and reduces the incidence of improper returns. A retailer sales associate is prompted to enter individual product identification information such as an individual serial number. This individual product identification information is then stored in a data base along with the date on which the product was sold and an appropriate UPC code, SKU number or manufacturer code. A check digit algorithm may be used to verify the serial number prior to storage. A sales receipt may be imprinted with at least the date of the transaction and the serial number. When a product is returned, the retailer may cross-reference the serial number on the product with that on the receipt to verify the sales receipt. Otherwise, the database may be searched for pertinent sales information. A customer may also access a return authorization engine via the Internet to obtain return approval, an authorization number, return instructions, etc. to reduce retailer hassle.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US01/14694

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC(7) : G06F 153/00 US CL : 705/28 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) U.S. : 705/28, 26		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) US patent database text search on EAST Non patent literature search on DIALOG		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of documents, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,984,508 A (HURLEY) 16 NOVEMBER 1999 SEE ABSTRACT AND FIGS. 2 AND 3	1-18
X	US 5,968,110 A (WESTROPE ET AL.) 19 OCTOBER 1999 SEE FIGS. 7 AND 8	1-18
A,E	US 6,269,344 B1 (JUNGER) 31 JULY 2001 SEE FIG. 3	1-18
A,P	US 6,085,172 A (JUNGER) 04 JULY 2000 SEE FIG. 3	1-18
A,P	US 6,154,738 A (CALL) 28 NOVEMBER 2000 SEE FIGS. 1 AND 7	1-18
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents	"T" later documents published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "A" documents member of the same patent family	
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance		
"E" earlier documents published on or after the international filing date		
"L" document which may throw doubt on priority claims or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)		
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means		
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed		
Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report	
25 SEPTEMBER 2001	05 NOV 2001	
Name and mailing address of the ISA: US Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks Box PCT Washington, D.C. 20231 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230	Authorized officer DOUGLAS A. HESS Peggy Hanood Telephone No. (703) 305-3900	

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1998) *

BEST AVAILABLE COPY AVAILABLE COPY